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UNCLAS ROME 000897

SIPDIS

FROM U.S. MISSION IN ROME

KINSHASA FOR AMBASSADOR HICKS AND USAID DIRECTOR GAMBINO
STATE FOR AS/PRM DEWEY, PRM/P, AF/C AND IO/EDA BEHREND AND
KOTOK
USAID FOR DAA/DCHA GRIGSBY, DCHA/FFP LANDIS, REDSO/ESA
USDA/FAS FOR CHAMBLISS/TILSWORTH/GAINOR
GENEVA FOR AMBASSADOR MOLEY, RMA LYNCH AND NKYLOH/USAID
USUN FOR AMBASSADOR NEGROPONTE AND MLUTZ
BRUSSELS FOR AFRICA WATCHERS AND USAID/LERNER
NSC FOR JDWORKEN AND AFRICA DIRECTORATE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAID](#) [EAGR](#) [AORC](#) [PREF](#) [KUNR](#) [WFP](#) [UNHCR](#)

SUBJECT: WFP BOARD APPROVES REPUBLIC OF CONGO PROTRACTED
RELIEF AND RECOVERY OPERATION (PRRO) VALUED AT U.S. DOLLARS
(USD) 13.16 MILLION - 18,141 METRIC TONS

SUMMARY

1. The WFP Executive Board, at its first regular session (February 23-26), approved a Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation for the Republic of the Congo (ROC). The project 10312.0, entitled Assistance to Populations Affected by Conflicts, is for two years (July 2004 - June 2006) with a total cost to WFP of USD 13.16 million. Beneficiaries are estimated at 177,850. Over the life-of-project, WFP will supply (subject to the availability of funds) a total of 18,141 metric tons of food aid.

Background

2. The ROC (also known as Congo-Brazzaville, population 3 million) experienced the internal displacement of some 100,000 people in 2002 in the country's Poole region (in the country's southeast). The armed conflicts (that have plagued the ROC since 1993) have caused both extensive loss of life and destruction to property. Although progress towards peace has occurred, substantive efforts are needed to ensure durable solutions for the country's internally displaced populations (IDPs). The PRRO's components are:
a) protracted relief through food-for-work activities in support of income generation and training of grass-roots communities, and school-feeding programs in conflict-affected regions (72 percent of program); b) free food distribution to destitute populations returning to their places of origin; and c) emergency seed-protection rations to farmers in areas that have recently become accessible.

U.S. intervention in support of approval of the Republic of
Congo PRRO

3. Herewith the essence of the supportive U.S. intervention:

-The United States is committed to supporting governmental and civil society mechanisms that lead to conflict resolution and reconciliation.

-Despite the peace agreement signed on March 17, 2003 between the rebels (dubbed "Ninjas") and the ROC, the Poole area in particular remains unstable. USDEL is informed that two of the few international relief organizations present in the region, Medecins sans Frontieres (MSF) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), recently reduced their relief activities pending a re-evaluation of the security situation. Accordingly, WFP needs to remain sanguine as to the dangers associated with implementing projects in this clearly volatile area. Approximately 37,000 former fighters in the area are still awaiting a return to civilian life.

-USAID's Food for Peace Nairobi office has recently visited the Republic of the Congo and reports that access to the project region is a major concern as it is presently under a UN Phase 4 security stance, meaning no effective access to International Organizations (IOs). Compounding this problem are the extremely poor road conditions for food deliveries to distribution sites, and the weak capacity of local implementing partners. Despite these obstacles and poor data regarding the situation on the ground, indications are that activities under the PRRO could have significant impact and contribute greatly to improving the nutritional

condition and general livelihoods of the war-affected. WFP needs to acknowledge its constraints and more intently focus on the logistics of distribution in the most affected areas of the Poole region.

-Monitoring is a key component of this PRRO. Although mention is made of program linkages to NGOs, the modalities of these relationships (including financial implications) need to be spelled out clearly.

U.S. support to WFP's ROC PRRO

14. Against the on going PRRO (6265.0 which covers the period January 2001-end June 2004), with a total requirement of USD 17.60 million (19,412 metric tons), U.S. contributions are USD 1.4 million (1,550 metric tons). Japan is the largest donor with a contribution of USD 4.6 million (5,768 metric tons). The present operation is about 50 percent funded.

Other donors

15. Other donor interventions were supportive. The WFP Country Director Benedict Fultang pointed out that the ROC government counterpart had purchased and donated two all-terrain vehicles to WFP for use in PRRO field visits.

Executive Board approval

16. The WFP Board approved the Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation for the Republic of the Congo (ROC). The project 10312.0, entitled Assistance to Populations Affected by Conflicts, is for two years (July 2004 - June 2006) with a total cost to WFP of USD 13.16 million. Beneficiaries are estimated at 177,850. Over the life-of-project, WFP will supply (subject to the availability of funds) a total of 18,141 metric tons of food aid. Hall

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2004ROME00897 - Classification: UNCLASSIFIED